

**SOUNDS OF SATIRE
ECHOES OF MADNESS**

Performance and evaluation in Cefalonia, Greece.

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“He was one of those in the world who have the most wit, liberality, magnificence, intrepidity, and was full of great projects, but perhaps he only wanted to have French troops in order to try and make himself king after the death of his master, which he saw as imminent. He was proud, cruel, pitiless, and with inordinate ambition. He supported the Christian religion because it could support him; but I would never have trusted him in things in which his own advancement was not involved”.

Abbé de Choisy MCMLXXIX *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de Louis XIV*, Mercure de France, p.150. (Reference is here to the Cefalonian Costantine Gerakis, known as Phaulkon, who served as prime-minister in Siam during the 1680s).

“What is life but a series of inspired follies? The difficulty is to find them to do. Never lose a chance. It doesn’t come every day”.

Shaw, B. 1972. *Collected plays with their prefaces: Pygmalion*. (vol.4). The Bodley Head: London, Syndey, Toronto p.691.

*“Foreigners, do not hope to buy our madness
our ancestors have never exported it
It is Cefalonian and it is not even contagious
Because , like ‘Monopoly’ we exclusively claim it ‘ours’!”.*

«Ω ξένοι μην ελπίζετε...τρέλλα μας να ψωνίσετε
Εξαγωγή δεν έκαναν ούτε κι οι πρόγονοί μας
Είναι Κεφαλονίτικη κι ούτε θα την κολλήσετε
Γιατί σα ‘Μονοπώλιο’ τη θέλουμε δική μας!»

Vounas, Ch. 1970. *Cefalonian satirical calendar of 1970*. Patras. p 75.

To all Cefalonians

who have and show “the spirit of the place”

Who feel and act as “Cefalonian Devils”

who are proud of being “mad Cefalonians”(kourli Kefalonites)...

DECLARATIONS FORM.

I, *EFPRAXIA POLLATOU*, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately *100.000* words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in *SEPTEMBER 2003* and as a candidate for the degree of *DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY* in *SEPTEMBER 2004* ; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between *2004* and *2009*.

date 4/08/09

signature of candidate

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of *DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY*... in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

date 4/08/09

signature of supervisor

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Abstract.

This thesis is about the construction of ‘satire’ as an exclusive practice among the Cefalonians and hence proposes the term *satiricity* (*satirikótita*). It explores the construction of the category of the Cefalonian “madman” by means of dialogics between performance and evaluation. It is observed that the relation depends on three principles that obtain among audience members and a performer: conditioning the performance, participation in and observation of the performance and evaluation of it.

Being one of the few anthropological studies on the Ionian islands of Greece, this thesis aims to contribute to the anthropology of the Ionian Islands and of Cefalonia in particular. It looks at the relation between a town and a village on the ground of teasing events and refutes the argument of satire as an urban phenomenon only. It sets the elementary principles towards anthropology of satire and emphasizes the importance of studying everyday teasing events. It also contributes to understanding a ‘native’ researcher’s presence in different ways.

Satiricity is seen as a ‘par excellence’ feature that Cefalonians have. No matter if Cefalonia is a part of the Greek Nation-State and people follow ‘modern Greek culture’, they still employ satiricity as a way of distancing themselves from Greeks. ‘Distance’ is forged on the basis of absolute exclusion of Greeks from having, practicing and understanding satiricity in the way that Cefalonians do.

The Conclusions leave the ground open for more investigation on teasing events, and application of such viewpoints around other areas of the island, and of the Ionian Islands, or other Greek islands. I also point to studies looking at island and mainland teasing events and potential differences. After all, we need to examine not only how people construct the claim on the exclusivity of ‘satire’. We need to examine how such a claim is applied, supported or contrasted and possibly rejected when Cefalonians engage with other Greeks away from the island.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

The study of 'inspired follies' to borrow from the epigraphs of this thesis, is not a painless task. On the contrary, it is arduous. It feels like the sculptor who has to work on solid marble with a chisel and see the marble turn into shape after many hours of work.

This has been my supervisor's rationale when advising me to get the chisel and start working on the 'marble' which I had brought back from the field in late November 2005. Now that I look back to the actualisation of this study, I think that he actually asked me to work on my self.

The product of this work, this thesis, is mostly his own labour. From this point of view, I would like to thank professor Tristan Platt for being a true mentor to me ever since I started my study on Cefalonian people. His continuous advice and encouragement had pushed me further than I thought I could reach. He has taught me even more in his tone of voice and his stance to anthropology. Most of all I would like to thank him for his patience with me and my own 'madness'.

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NOTES TO THE READER.

The name of the island is Cefalonia. It is usually spelt in this way and I use this spelling throughout the thesis, unless quoting an author using a different spelling. Intonation is Cefalonjá,(I use j here to denote synizesis) even though Cefalónia is also used. Yet, other spellings are valid and often appear in texts, like travellers' accounts. These are Kephalaria, Kefalaria, Kefallinia, Cephalonia.

The term 'Ionion' that is used to denote the geographical and cultural area to which Cefalaria belongs, is not to be confused with the area known as Ionia. The term appears interchangeably with 'Ionian' in maps and sites. In this thesis, I use the correct form Ionion.

Ionion islands are also known as the Heptanese because of the number of the main islands that comprise the complex: seven (epta). Ionia, on the other hand, refers to the area known as Asia Minor and stretches along the west coast of Turkey.

Place names and peoples' names are real, to the extent that people have consented to be recognised. When otherwise, initial letters have been employed. In addition, I have either used existing versions of proper names or created mine in order to indicate different people bearing the same proper name and thus avoid confusion.

In giving the equivalent Greek or, on a local level, Cefalonian terms for concepts, I have followed the phonetic transcription of terms. I have marked the syllable which is stressed.

Photographs are mine, unless otherwise stated.

Translation of transcribed texts is also mine. The transcribed texts that are presented and partially commented upon in this thesis are parts of longer recordings.

I use the term Kondogenadites (Greek) interchangeably with Kondogenaditians (English).

I use italics for Greek terms that I think may contribute to constructing a vocabulary of "satire" which emerges in the course of the thesis.

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Proximity to Italy (source: www.worldatlas.com).

Administrative and ‘cultural’ areas of Cefalonia. (source: kefalonianet.com).

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Greece and the Ionian Islands.



The exact location of the island along the Ionian sea.
(source: www.map-of-greece.org).



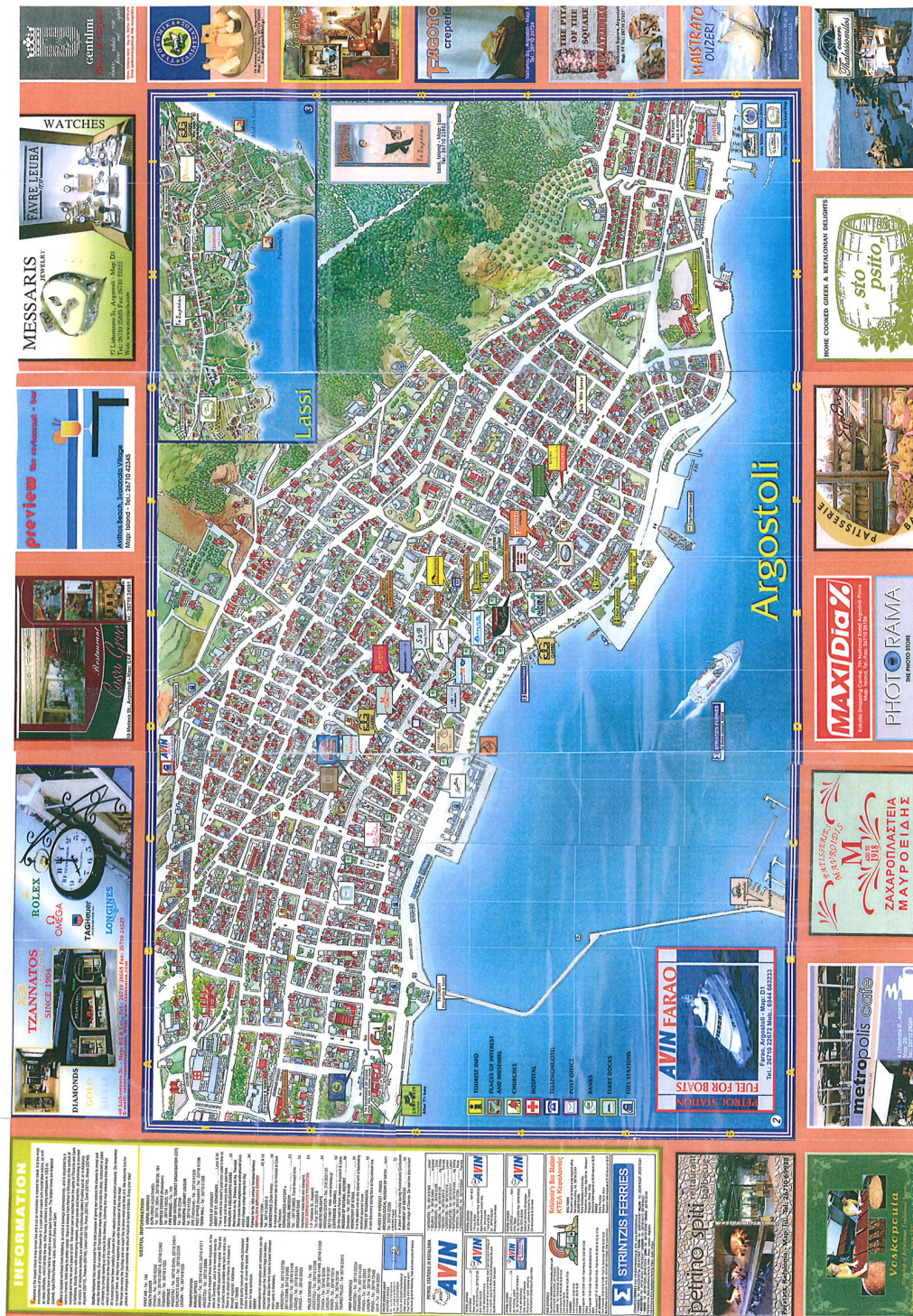
To the west of Greece and close to Italy...



The Island of Cefalonia and to its right the island of Ithaca.
The map shows administrative and cultural areas of the island.
(Source: kefalonianet.com.)



Locating the fieldsites: the location of Argostoli and of Kondogenada on the island.



This is a view of Argostoli. The marketplace stretches along a wide area, part of which is here marked with shop labels. Source: map of Cefalonia distributed by “Panelinionikis” bicycle shop, Argostoli.



Locating Kondogenada along Paliki province...